

Message Text

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72

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-13 ACDA-19 OMB-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

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R 241450Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4391

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS; PINS XF

SUBJ: FEDAYEEN POSITION RE DETENTE WITH JORDAN

REF: BEIRUT 11209

BEGIN SUMMARY; FOLLOWING ISSUANCE HERE SEP 22 OF PLO
COMMUNIQUE OUTLINING "UNIFIED" FEDAYEEN POSITION RE DETENTE WITH
JORDAN AND TERMS FOR COMMANDO RETURN TO EAST BANK,
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MEETING APPARENTLY BEING HELD TODAY AT DAMASCUS BETWEEN SARG

PRES ASSAD AND FEDAYEEN LEADERSHIP. WE SUSPECT UNDERLYING FATAH-SA'IQA DIFFERENCES RE DETENTE AND OTHER RELATED SUBJS HAVE LARGELY BEEN MRELY PAPERED OVER, AND IT THEREFORE APPEARS CONJECTURAL WHETHER MEETING WITH ASSAD WILL CONTRIBUTE TO MORE FUNDAMENTAL RESOLUTION OF INTRA-FEDAYEEN RIVALRIES. END SUMMARY.

1. AFTER 2 DAYS OF LENGTHY MEETING SIN BEIRUT TO WORK OUT "UNIFIED" FEDAYEEN POSITION RE DETENTE WITH JORDAN AND RELATED ISSUES, PLO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ISSUED COMMUNIQUE HERE SEP 22 (FBIS M222000) REAFFIRMING DEMAND FOR REESTABLISHMENT OF "FIGHTING EASTERN FRONT" (REFTEL) ON BASIS FOL CONDITIONS: (A) FEDAYEEN RETURN TO JORDAN AS "INDISPUTABLE NATIONAL RIGHT" GUARANTEEING "FREEDOM TO PURSUE STRUGGLE AGAINST OCCUPYING ENEMY"; (B) EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN FRONT BY SYRIAN AND IRAQI FORCES "UNDER RELIABLE NATIONALIST COMMAND"; AND (C) SAFEGUARDS FOR "OUR PEOPLE'S FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOM", ESPECIALLY IN JORDAN, THAT WOULD ENSURE FULL FEDAYEEN PARTICIPATION IN STRUGGLE AGAINST ISRAEL. COMMUNIQUE COMPLAINED OVER TERMS SYRIAN-EGYPTIAN RAPPROACHMENT WITH JORDAN AND WARNED PLO WOULD NOT ALLOW "THIS REACTIONARY MANEUVER" TO DESTROY FEDAYEEN RELATIONS WITH SARG AND GOE. AT SAME TIME, PLO/EC TOOK CREDIT FOR FORCING KING HUSSEIN GRANT AMNESTY DECISION. IN CONCLUSION, COMMUNIQUE ATTACKED ALL PROPOSALS FOR PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF PALESTINE PROBLEM.

(COMMENT: WE NOTE PLO/EC STATEMENT MADE NO REFERENCE TO CERTAIN OTHER "DEMANDS" VOICED HERE RECENTLY BY VARIOUS FEDAYEEN SPOKESMEN (PARA 4, BEIRUT 10956). FOR EXAMPLE, IT AVOIDED EXPLICIT CONDEMNATION OF HASHEMITE REGIME AND KING HUSSEIN'S WEST BANK FEDERATION PLAN, AND CONTAINED NO MENTION OF PLA. IT ALSO TONED DOWN PREVIOUS BITTER COMMANDO DENUNCIATIONS OF SYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN POLICY VIS-A-VIS JORDAN, DID NOT WAVE BLOODY SHIRT RE EVENTS OF SEP 1970, AND MADE NO REFERENCE TO RECENT SYRIAN RESTRICTIONS ON SYRIAN ACTIVITY. IN ADDITION, IT EMPHASIZED NECESSITY OF STRENGTHENING "METHODS OF COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND ACTION" WITHIN PLO FRAMEWORK AND BETWEEN PLO AND ARAB "NATIONALIST" REGIMES. STATEMENT THUS APPEARS TO BE PRODUCT OF COMPROMISE AND RESTRAINT WITHIN FEDAYEEN LEADERSHIP, THOUGH WE SUSPECT MUCH IN WAY OF INTERNAL DIFFERENCES AND BITTERNESS WAS PAPERED OVER FOR SAKE OF "UNIFIED" PUBLIC POSTURE.)

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2. NEWS REPORTS INDICATE THAT 'ARAFAT WILL LEAD PLO/EC DELEGATION TO DAMASCUS SEP 24 TO PRESENT FEDAYEEN VIEWS TO PRES ASSAD, AND STRIVE OBTAIN REOPENING OF VOP RADIO AT DERA'A AND RELEASE OF IMPRISONED COMMANDOS. THEIR MEETING SHOULD PROVE INTERESTING, GIVEN ASSAD'S EFFORTS (BEIRUT 11167) TO ASSUME DETACHED POSTURE IN FATAH-SA'IQA "CONFLICT" OVER WHAT OBSERVERS BELIEVE TO BE FUTURE PREDOMINANCE IN FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT.

3. SARG APPARENTLY HAS YET TO RELAX ITS LATEST RESTRICTIONS ON FEDAYEEN ACTIVITY IN SYRIA. PFLP GENERAL COMMAND, REPORTEDLY IS FURIOUS OVER RECENT SARG ARREST OF 7 PFLP/GC ADHERENTS FOR DISTRIBUTING LEAFLETS CONDEMNING DETENTE WITH "FASCIST" JORDAN AND REACTIVATION OF "DEFEATIST" EASTERN FRONT. ALTHOUGH 'ARAFAT AND SA'IQA'S ZOHAYR MUHSEN ARE PUBLICLY DENYING EXISTENCE OF CONFLICT AMONG FEDAYEEN ORGANIZATIONS, SEP 23 INTERVIEW WITH PDFLP CHIEF HAWATMEH CARRIED BY IRAQI NEWS AGENCY CONFIRMED EXISTENCE OF "SPLIT" IN COMMANDO RANKS, CHARGED GOJ IS USING CONCEPT OF REACTIVATION EASTERN FRONT TO DESTROY FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT AND DENOUNCED ARAB REGIMES GENERALLY FOR ACCEPTING "CONCESSIONS FROM ARAB REACTIONARIES IN FAVOR OF ISRAEL AND IMPERIALISM". DECON 9/24/74.
HOUGHTON

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED CAIRO.

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